

**BUREAU OF COUNTERTERRORISM AND COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM**  
**Country Reports on Terrorism 2016**  
**Report**

**EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC**

**Overview:** In 2016, terrorist attacks occurred in Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand. ISIS-affiliated operatives attempted but failed to conduct additional attacks in Indonesia and the Philippines, and a number of other terrorist attacks were foiled by arresting or deporting individuals who were in various stages of attack planning in these countries, as well as Australia and Malaysia. The flow of foreign terrorist fighters to Iraq or Syria from the region declined throughout 2016, consistent with global trends. As a result, regional concerns shifted to foreign terrorist fighters potentially returning to Southeast Asia and using the operational training, skills, connections, and experience gained in Iraq or Syria to launch domestic attacks.

Governments in East Asia and the Pacific continued to work to strengthen legal frameworks, investigate and prosecute terrorism cases, increase regional cooperation and information sharing, and address critical border and aviation security gaps throughout the year. Cooperation between domestic law enforcement and judicial authorities throughout Southeast Asia, especially in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore, resulted in high numbers of terrorism-related arrests and, in many cases, successful prosecutions. Despite these efforts, Southeast Asia remained a target for terrorist group recruitment.

East Asian countries actively participated in regional and international efforts to counter terrorism. Australia, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, and Taiwan are partners in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. Australia and Indonesia continued their co-chairmanship of the Global Counterterrorism Forum's Detention and Reintegration Working Group.

The Japanese government continued to participate in international counterterrorism efforts at global, regional, and bilateral levels. Japan identified counterterrorism as one of its priorities for its G-7 presidency and joined the UN Security Council as an elected member for 2016-2017.

China's counterterrorism efforts focused primarily on the East Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM); it continued to claim ETIM has influence in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR) and was responsible for several domestic attacks, as well as an attack on the Chinese Embassy in The Kyrgyz Republic. In July, the XUAR became the only provincial level government to pass specific implementing measures of a new counterterrorism law. China continued to express concerns that Chinese citizens have traveled to Syria and Iraq to associate with ISIS.